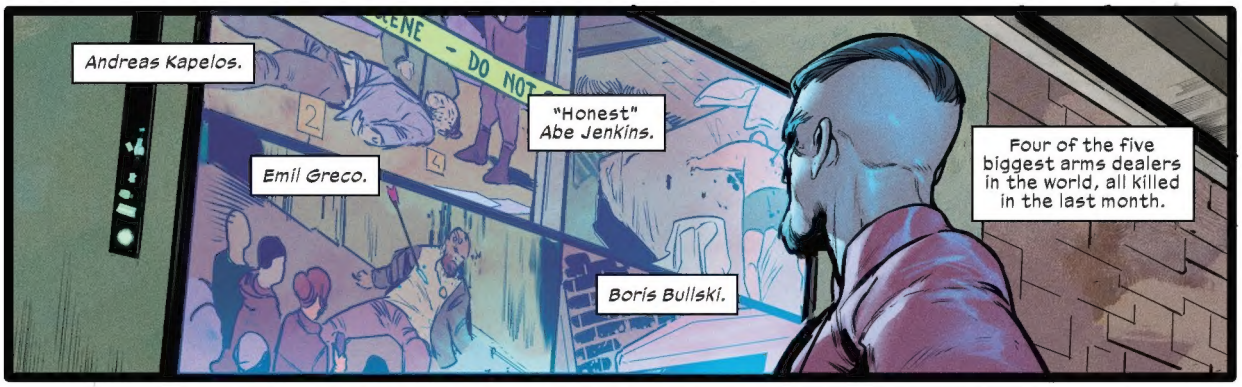
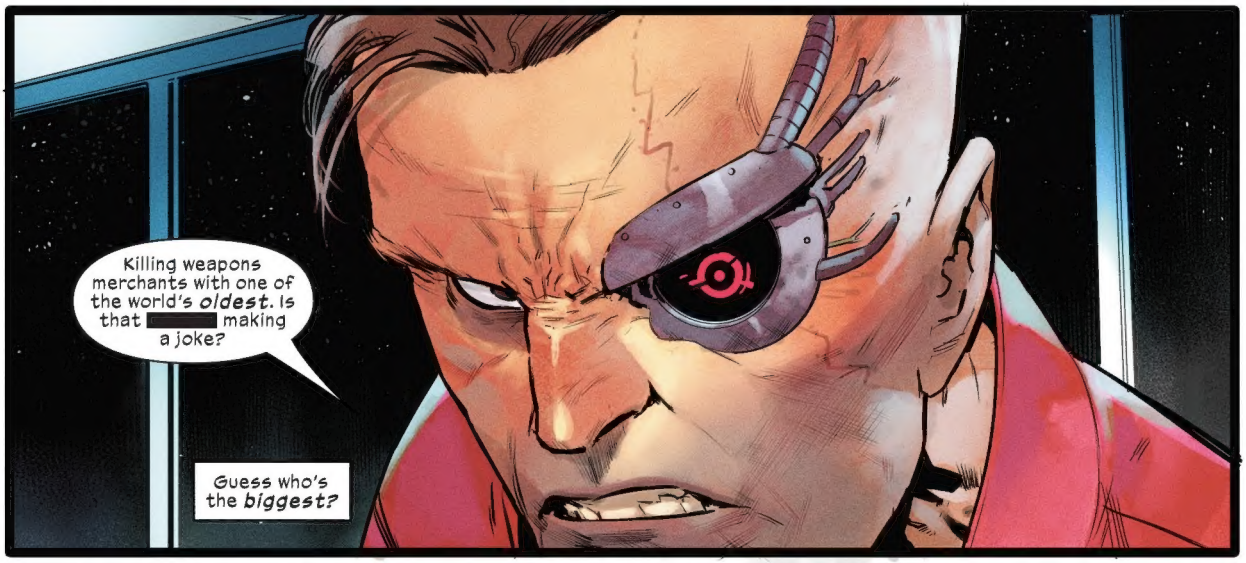
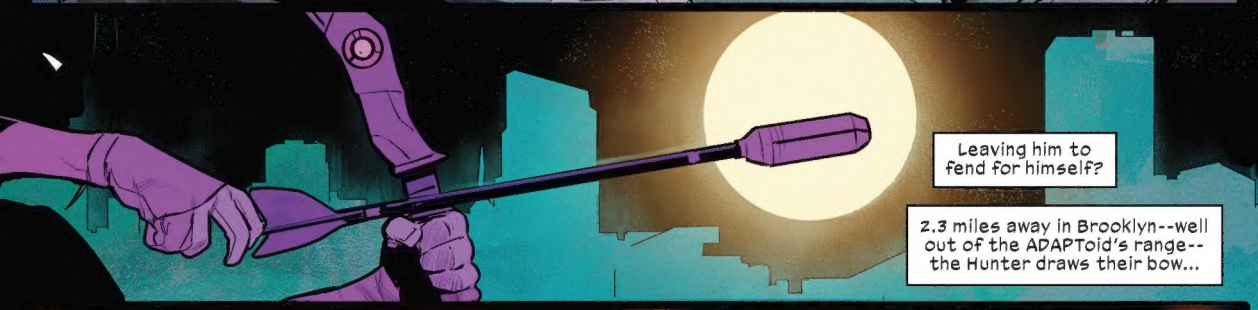
MARVEL
ULTIMATE
HAWKEYE
1
TABOO | B. EARL | CAMP
STA. MARIA | FRIGERI
SINCLAIR | BLEE
SEPT. 2025 | RATED T+

Ulysses Klaue nervously checks his overpriced A.I.M. ADAPToid security system for the third time in twenty minutes.
All readings normal.
AIRSPACE : CLEAR
ADAPToid System: Fully Operational
"The best system money can buy."
Piece of [redacted]!
So why doesn't he believe it?
Actually, he got it wholesale. Being a major figure in the international arms trade has its perks.
And, *lately*, its ***risks.***
Until recently, he didn't ***need*** sonic bafflers, impact-absorbing vibranium-plated walls, antiaircraft gun mounts or RPG-proof windows in his home. He didn't need a one-mile radius of total airspace awareness to sleep soundly at night.
--ascribed yet again to the Ultimates--
But times have changed. And Ulysses has been ***hearing*** things.


Andreas Kapelos.
"Honest" Abe Jenkins.
Emil Greco.
Boris Bullski.
Four of the five biggest arms dealers in the world, all killed in the last month.


Killing weapons merchants with one of the world's *oldest*. Is that [redacted] making a joke?
Guess who's the *biggest?*

More weapons had passed through Ulysses' hands than anyone on Earth. As a cutout for the Maker's Council, he'd supplied the weapons that fueled decades of conflict all over the world! And *this* is how they repay him?


Leaving him to fend for himself?
2.3 miles away in Brooklyn--well out of the ADAPTOid's range--the Hunter draws their bow...

...and Ulysses feels an inexplicable *tension*. He's been *hearing* things.
All readings normal.

Miles away, thanks to the StarkTech headpiece, Hawkeye hears Ulysses Klaue's heartbeat as though their ear were pressed against his *chest*.
It's beating *fast*.
Theirs too. The excitement has been building all through the hunt to this crescendo.
They hear the sounds outside Klaue's high-priced penthouse--omnipresent hum of engines, horns blaring, sudden explosions of laughter, one-sided conversations, the rustle of money changing hands.
Listen to *this*.
They hear the adrenaline singing in their blood. It has the sweetest twang.
Ulysses Klaue has been trying to hear what's coming for him.

But the hunter-killer arrow, already moving at Mach 3, *can't* be heard.
Until it's too late.
It takes fourteen seconds to close the distance, taking turns and avoiding obstacles like it has a mind of its own.
In fact, it does.
MIDAS TOWER
The fingernail-sized brain in its shaft outsmarts the sonic baffles and outmanuevers ADAPTOid interceptor rounds.
Moving at that speed, the molecule-thick tip of the arrow slides through four inches of unbreakable glass like an Olympic diver breaking the water...

...as smoothly as the final breath slides between a dying man's teeth.
By the time the sound catches up and the arrow announces itself, Ulysses Klaue is beyond hearing.
KRASH
Yes! Gotcha!
Nice shot, Hawkeye. Did you say you were going--?
Yeah, Tony. Lose my number for a while.
The hunt has been long and productive. Game are plentiful. Most hunters would be satisfied.
I'm going to a *party*...
But Hawkeye has been *hearing* things.

The Meatpacking District.
"O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:
"Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy."
--William Blake
My mom loved poetry. Any sort of poetry. She'd pick up secondhand anthologies from the community college to add to her never-ending collection.
But she read every one of them. Memorized a good amount too. Said it brought her peace during the chaos.
We all pick up bits and pieces of our parents along the way. Some are good, some not so good.

She also had a terrible temper. Called it her "*righteous anger.*" Got her into a lot of trouble--and killed her in the end.
I'd like to think that I didn't get that part of her. That all I got was the poetry.
But I know I did.
WHOOOOOSH

Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate
Welcome, honored guest. The Circles await on the Spiral. May you find the pleasure you seek and the pain you desire. May I have the pass?
Sagittarius.
"May temperance be shed and Lust embraced!
"Enjoy the festivities as well as the main event, which will be presented at the end of the evening."

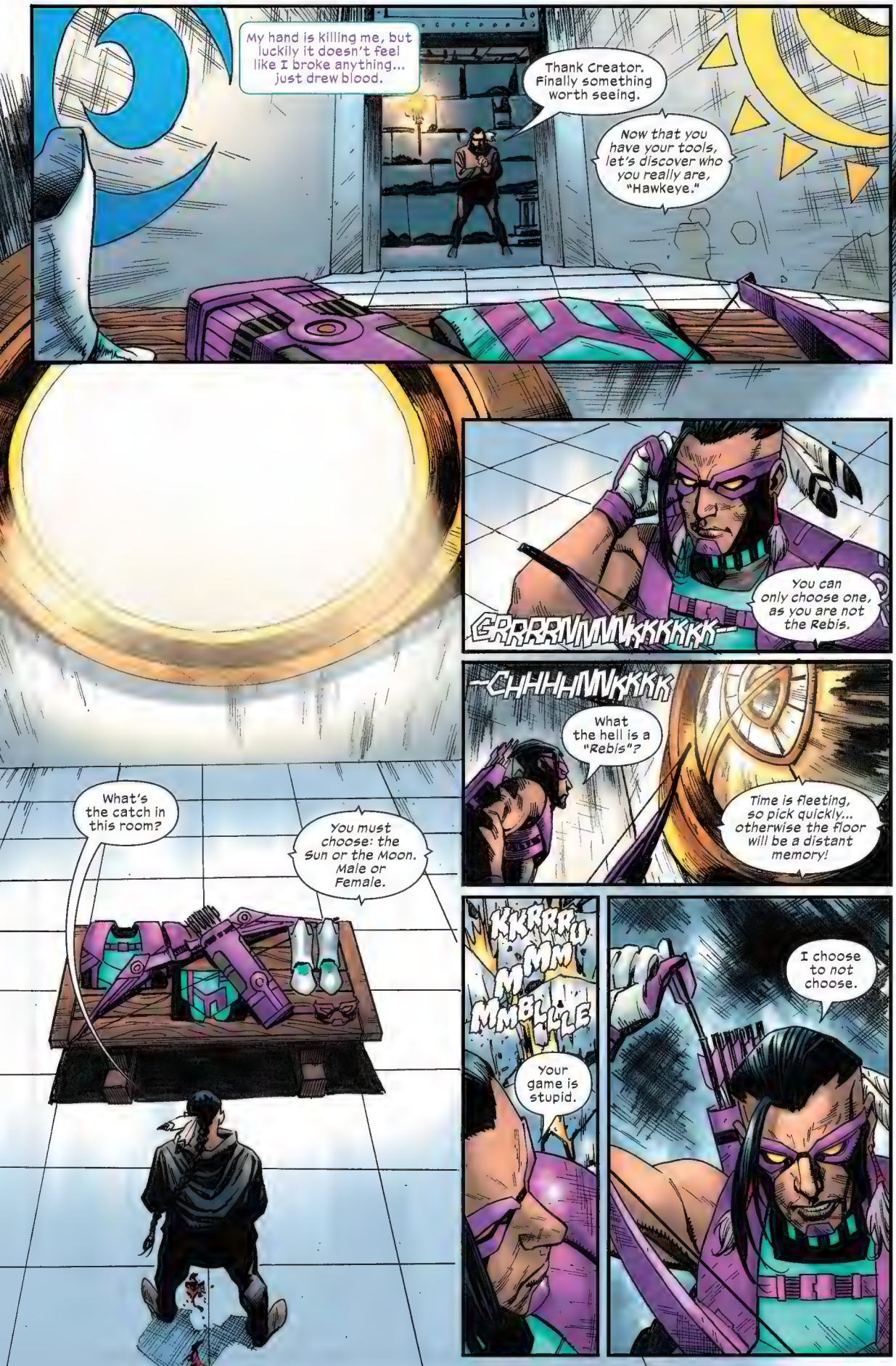
Circle O, Room 13. That's my mark. Lucky 13.
O-I-I
O-I
Get the photos, grab some video, then we're out.
O-I-I
No need to expose myself or make this messier than needed. But I'm always prepared.
Found you, Senator.
O-XIII
Um, sorry? Wrong room.
Nope, right room. Time to pay the piper, Hawkeye.
Get 'em, boys!
THHHWWWWIIIFFTTT
THWWWWIMMP
Unh!

Don't fight it, pal. You'll only make it worse.
Do you know who you're messing with?
Something in the dart is turning the world into a Max Fleischer flick.
Weren't you listening earlier? Of course we do.
WHHHHEEEEEE
I didn't mean it literally.
Figuratively, literally--it doesn't matter. You're the main attraction tonight, buddy. The show must go on!
BOOM
I'm not your "buddy," "pal"...

This wasn't how I saw the evening going.
Welcome, Hawkeye. Tonight will be your trials and tribulations, brought on by your actions and alliances.
So you knew I was coming?
We placed the bait, and you took the bite. You're quite predictable, Charli Ramsey.
Now comes your first choice. The Hammer or the Ruler? Which will it be? Choose wisely, as it will set the stage!
You think I'm some kind of idiot? What the hell good is a ruler against psychopaths?
CLICK

I didn't know good ol' "Honest" Abe Jenkins was such a sicko. His token was gonna get me to the Senator.
Instead, I'm a rat trapped in their maze. And it sounds like there's something in the walls stalking me.
SCCRRTTCHHH
SCCRTTTCH
This definitely feels personal.
CLICK-CLACK
CLICK-CLACK
The hammer is used to break off the superfluities.
Your hand has been raised against us and now must be offered to proceed further.
Awww, come on. Really?
And if I had chosen the ruler?
You chose the correct tool for the job at hand... pun intended.

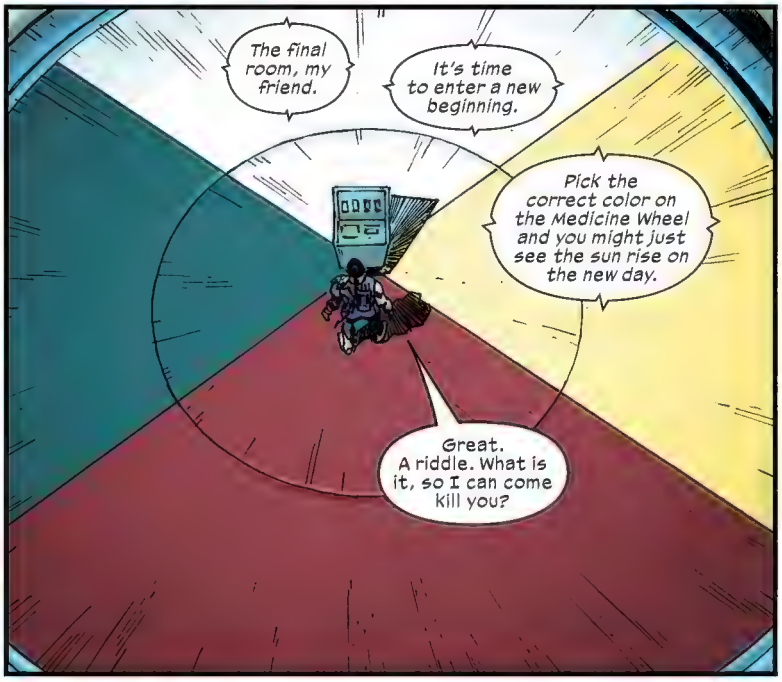
Click-clack. The claws are coming, and time is ticking.
CLICK CLACK CLICK CLACK
Y'all are sick, you know that?
It takes one to know one, Charli. We just let the beast out to play.
YAAAARRGHHH!!!
Make the offering and open the door.
Otherwise, you'll find that hammer offers little defense against what's coming.
CLICK CLACK CLICK CLACK
When I find you, you'll suffer ten times whatever you do to me.
Technically, you're doing this to yourself.


My hand is killing me, but luckily it doesn't feel like I broke anything... just drew blood.
Thank Creator. Finally something worth seeing.
Now that you have your tools, let's discover who you really are, "Hawkeye."
GRRRRMMMMKKKKKK--
You can only choose one, as you are not the Rebis.
--CHHHHMMKKKK
What the hell is a "Rebis"?
Time is fleeting, so pick quickly... otherwise the floor will be a distant memory!
What's the catch in this room?
You must choose: the Sun or the Moon. Male or Female.
KKRRRMMM MMBLLLE
Your game is stupid.
I choose to not choose.

Really? Spike traps *and* crumbling floors? Feels like these freaks watched way too many *Indiana Jones* movies.
Aaaaachhhh... dammit, that hurts!
KKKRACSSHHHH
TTTHHHHHHHWWWWIIIISHHHHH
BOOOOOOOOM
Whoooaaaa...

My hand is on fire. If my fingers weren't broken before, they definitely are now.

Interesting choice to take the middle path. Might have wanted to save your hand for what's in store, though. No matter.


The final room, my friend.
It's time to enter a new beginning.
Pick the correct color on the Medicine Wheel and you might just see the sun rise on the new day.
Great. A riddle. What is it, so I can come kill you?

You've already been given the riddle. Now hurry and choose the correct color, otherwise you'll be fed to the wolves.
CLINK CLINK CLINK CLINK

Really? What was the riddle? New day? Sun rising? Come on, disembodied voice! Say it again.
GRRRRKKKKKKAAASHH
GRRRRKKKKKAAASHH

Each color is a direction.
New beginnings might be yellow. Or white.
Sunrise feels like yellow. But when I learned this from my grandmother, it didn't really make sense.
The colors weren't logically aligned with the meanings.
GRRRKAASSHH
Need to buy some time. I can smell her fry bread. Best way to remember is by the nose.
Now I can see her living room. Faded corduroy couch. It used to be fire-engine red. I remember that. New beginnings that burn away the old.
It's red. The East. The new day.
THROOOOOOOOOMMMMMM
CLICK
Leap of faith?
SHHHWWSSSHH
I'm coming for you, whoever you are!

Huh? Where...?
Welcome, Hawkeye, to Exterminatrix's pit of despair!
So glad you could join us.
As you may have realized, this is an evening of both pleasure and pain. We've had our pleasure while enjoying your pain.
And we all have been rooting for you to make it to this final challenge.
Why? What's this about?
You've caused a lot of pain, blowing up our pipelines, creating all sorts of mischief.
Hundreds of millions of dollars of pain.
That's not the sort of pain we particularly enjoy.
You work for Roxxon? And this party? Roxxon?
You could say that. We work hard, play harder. But it's no matter, as I'd like to introduce you to the other participant in tonight's presentation.
One you don't know but has had a profound impact on your life.
May I present to you...

...THE RONIN!!!

To up the ante and make this even more interesting, we have both your families in our proverbial... *and* actual crosshairs.
May I bring your attention to the screens surrounding the arena?
If either of you refuses to fight, we will kill your families. Your entire line will be eradicated.
And the *loser* will suffer the same fate.
You can't be serious.
That is one thing we are, Charli Ramsey... *serious*.
Ronin knows this. He owes us a lot of money.
If he survives, the debt will be forgiven.
You also owe us a lot of money, with all of the trouble you've caused.
But if *you* win, *your* debt will be forgiven.
You can't play with people's lives like this!
Oh, but we can. And we *will*.
I'm gonna need my hand working. This warrior looks fresh. No trials for *them*.
You're not worthy of the Hawkeye mantle, Charli Ramsey.
And I'm about to take it from you...one shaft at a time.
Not sure I like the sound of that, pal.

He's fast. Trained. Maybe military?
Not someone I've seen before in my time with the Ultimates.
Something familiar in how he said my name, though.
My broken fingers work better together. Wish I had thought of this earlier.
SWWWWSSSSHHHH
Slowing him down will be key.
I'm running on pure adrenaline right now. I don't even feel the pain.
KRRRAUUUUHHH
Unnnnnghh.
It *should* hurt. Probably broke a few ribs with that one. Doesn't feel like I punctured a lung.

I'm reacting. Not centered. My breathing is shallow.
I can feel my anger bubbling into my mother's temper.
You cannot take what is not meant for you.
All I want to do is kill this "Ronin."
Cut his throat and pull his tongue out through the hole.
I see it playing in my mind...
SLASSSHHHH
YAAAAHHHHH!!
...but it's not happening in real time.
KILLLL!!!
KILLLL!!!
Finish it, Ronin.
This isn't the end. It can't be. It won't be. My family will not be taken out by some disgusting latex freak and her oil-baron lackeys.
I channel every ounce of energy. Every hug from my mom. Every tear from my dad. My grandma's bedtime stories and my grandfather's truck rides.
Now I close out my debt and set right what never should have been.
Whatever helps you sleep at night.
Just do it already.

My mother's favorite poem comes back in a flash--Blake's The Sick Rose.
With my last bit of strength, I use my foot as leverage, nocking an arrow to end this charade. I focus on the words as they appear in my mind's eye.
so it shall be.
O Rose thou art sick. The invisible worm, That flies in the night In the howling storm:
Has found out thy bed Of crimson joy:
Ahhh!
NO!!!
And his dark secret love
My eyes!!!
Does thy life destroy.
YOU

KILL HIM!!! FINISH IT!!!
TEAR OUT HIS TONGUE!!!
CUT HIS THROAT!!!
An unexpected twist! Nice touch blinding him.
Who are you, Ronin?
The one who was supposed to be you.
Kill him, or I will!
No.
BLAM
Then he will turn from lead into gold!
The process is complete. Clint Barton's blood is on your hands.
I have no more energy to even speak. The adrenaline's worn off, and the world fades to black. All I can do is pray to Creator she spares my family.

I underestimated Roxxon.
They're more dangerous than I thought.
We have kept our word, Hawkeye. We are not total monsters. That said, the right to be called the Ronin is yours. If you desire to don the mantle, leave the Token under the archway and we will contact you for engagement. But if you ever raise another hand against us, we will exterminate your entire family in front of you before we cut your throat from ear to ear.
I need to see my family.
This has been one messed-up night, and all I can think about is having some of grandma's fry bread.
And then sizzling up a side of payback.
The End.